



# ● INFO memo – Jan. 16, 2004

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## **Palmer Honored as Firefighter of Year**

Saving lives and property may be a part of their jobs, but sometimes the way Broken Arrow Firefighters and Paramedics do those jobs is truly heroic.

Such has been the case this past year, and when it came time to select the Broken Arrow Chamber of Commerce Firefighter of the Year, the “job” was tougher than ever.

Interim Fire Chief Greg Neely confirmed that fact when he announced that Loren Palmer had been selected for the honor, which will be presented Jan. 30 at the Chamber of Commerce Awards Banquet in Tulsa.

“We received four nominations, all of which involved extraordinary life saving incidents involving very competent and valuable personnel,” said Neely. “The decision was not an easy one.”

Neely went on to say that the contributions of the other three nominees “were nothing short of incredible.” Before listing the reasons those four were nominated, Neely added in a report to the BAFD personnel, “thank you to all of you, who stand ready to perform these and similar acts day in and day out for the citizens of Broken Arrow.”

The others who were nominated included Firefighter/Paramedic Chris Johnson of Station No. 2 B Shift; Captain Charlie Carlile of Station No. 5, B Shift; and the B Shift Crew of Station No. 5, which included Carlile, Driver Mike Hogan, Firefighters Robert Goode and Thad Teel and Firefighter/Paramedic Robert Gordon.

Palmer is a Firefighter/Paramedic from Station No. 4’s A Shift. His “resume” includes the praise that he “has been an example to his peers by his action, demonstrated both in house, and on the emergency scene.”

The incident which led to his award occurred on Sept. 30, when Palmer and the crew of Engine 4 responded to a motor vehicle accident. A small vehicle had run off the road, hit a culvert pipe and gone airborne. The four young men and boys in the vehicle were all were thrown several feet from the point of impact. The two boys were laying 20 to 30 feet away, “unconscious and with head injuries and other complications.”

As Neely pointed out, it was a perfect example of the ultimate challenges to first-responder personnel: if the lives of the boys were to be saved, action had to be taken quickly; but even quick action would not matter if the correct measures were not taken.

LifeFlight was called to the scene, as were two other EMS units. “Both of the boys were fighting for oxygen and were very combative. With Palmer’s experience and ability, he was able to keep his composure and administer the proper medical assistance to these youths, which aided in their survival.”

Neely reports that doctors and nurses who continued life-saving efforts at the hospital called it “nothing short of a miracle that these youths lived. Personally, I thought there was no chance in this physical world these kids would live. Loren would give credit to all those who assisted in the emergency, but because of his dedication to his job, to his training and to our citizens, Loren Palmer shines like a polished gem for our department.”

Since the incident, the youngsters have come by the station two or three times to express their gratitude. The boys are still in physical therapy, but are improving steadily.”

## **City Takes Holiday Monday for King Birthday**

In honor of the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., the City of Broken Arrow close its offices Monday (Jan. 19), and the City Council meeting normally held on Monday will be moved to Tuesday night.

With the exception of Police and Fire department personnel, City employees will have the day off.

There will be no curbside trash pickup Monday. Those customers who normally have service on Monday will have pickup Tuesday, with Tuesday customers having service Wednesday.

The Council meeting will begin at 7 p.m. in the City Council Chambers Tuesday night.

## **BAPD Traffic Specialist Unit Honored**

For the third straight year, the number of traffic collisions in Broken Arrow has decreased, this time by an amazing 12 percent.

Police Chief Todd Wuestewald reports that the TSU, under the direction of Sgt. Ed Ferguson, will be honored at the “Buckledown Award” ceremonies at Tulsa’s Saint Francis Hospital on Thursday, Feb. 12.

The number of crashes reported in 2003 dropped to 1,509, down from 1,724 in 2002. Over the past three years that decrease has topped 17 percent.

The five officers on that unit are Chris Chambers, Timothy Collins, William Cook, Deidre Henson and Bradley McCombs.

In a memo to Wuestewald and the members of the unit, Ferguson pointed out that the reduction in collisions is a result of a “team approach” and the personal dedication of those involved. The five officers in the TSU were responsible for

issuing 30 percent of all citations for the BAPD in 2003, including 54 percent of all occupant restraint (seat belts and child seats) citations.

He added, "You continued your efforts to combat speed-related problems by generating 43 percent of all speed citations that were issued during 2003 in the City of Broken Arrow. For this reason I want to thank all of the officers in the BATSU through nomination for a unit 'Buckledown Award.'"

Ferguson also singled out Henson for her traffic enforcement efforts during the year. She led all uniformed officers with 1,080 citations issued and 490 speeding citations. Collins is being recognized for his "commitment to our occupant restraint laws, issuing 26 percent of all citations among agency officers for seat belt and restraint violations. Officer Collins was solely responsible for 49 percent of all seat belt citations that were issued by his peers in the Traffic Specialist Unit for a total of 277."

## **Street Divisions Ready for Winter Weather**

After seeing the year 2003 exit with the roar of a major winter storm, Broken Arrow's Public Works Department has enjoyed a few weeks of mild weather starting the new year.

But Dave Wooden, Director of Public Works, knows that there will certainly be a few more winter bursts before spring arrives, and his Streets Division is prepared.

The early storms put a dent in the stock of sand and salt used to battle the ice and snow, but there's still plenty of both on hand for future needs.

The Street and Drainage System crews (27 workers) are responsible for 860 miles of streets and 43 miles of storm sewers in Broken Arrow. One of the major changes in their work has come in the area of street "stripping," where new equipment helped them increase work from just over half a million feet in 2002 to 1,366,024 last year. That's an increase of 159.37 percent.

Major asphalt repairs were up over 50 percent in 2003 (812,675 compared to 531,789) and concrete repairs increased from 16,203 to 36,181.

## **Community Center Site of Softball Registration**

Registration continues at the Broken Arrow Community Center for the Broken Arrow Girls Softball League spring season of 2004 on the next two Saturdays, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day. There will also be a Tuesday night, Jan. 20, signup from 6 to 8 p.m.

There will be a \$10 late fee for all registrations received after Jan. 24.

Girls must be 4 years old before Dec. 31, 2003, to participate. There are leagues for T-ball, coach pitch, recreational 8-under and 10-under, along with rec-12, 14 and 16 and 18, as well as competitive leagues for 10-under, 12, 14 and 16 and 18.

Practices begin March 1 and games start March 29. The BAGSL uses the Central Park and Arrowhead Park softball complexes.

For additional information call 251-0868.

Registration for youth baseball and youth soccer continues at their offices. Baseball registration is at the Youth Sports building at 1005 S. Main, while the soccer signups are at its office behind Egg Roll Express just north of Kenosha on Elm. Those associations also use City facilities (at Indian Springs Sports Complex) for their league games.